

Leslie Stiehl - Response to DWR/FERC Cultural Resources Working Group Action Item

From: Glenn Farris
To: Stiehl, Leslie
Date: 11/21/01 3:58PM
Subject: Response to DWR/FERC Cultural Resources Working Group Action Item

Hi Leslie,

Sorry to have taken so long to get this back to you. The question raises a number of issues that we have not focused on dealing with access to catalogues of artifacts as opposed to the direct access to the artifacts themselves.

The question being asked by your working group was: "Find out if the public has access to all artifact catalogue from the Lake Oroville construction and if so provide them at the next meeting."

In answer to the first part of the question, we ask individuals or groups interested in seeing the catalogs to provide us with a formal request outlining who is requesting the information and for what purpose will the information be used. The collections from Lake Oroville are currently held by California State Parks in two locations: 1) Collections that include human remains have been separated out and have been inventoried as part of the NAGPRA process. Copies of the NAGPRA inventories have been provided to the Secretary of the Interior for inclusion in their broader NAGPRA report. These human remains and the associated artifacts along with the catalogues for these materials are housed in the Museum Collections Resource Center in West Sacramento under the direction of Betty Smart; 2) Other collections from the Oroville projects that did not have human remains are held at the Archaeological Collections Facility in West Sacramento under the direction of Glenn Farris.

To answer the second part of the query, although public access to the catalogues is permitted through the process mentioned above, we are not in a position to send copies of these catalogues to the committee.

There are several reasons for the security measures. The basic one is that we are acting as stewards of the collections and therefore are concerned with who it is that wishes to know about these collections and for what purpose. We certainly are not trying to keep them a secret from the tribal peoples from the area. Many of the catalogues as they currently exist may provide information such as location of the sites from which the human remains and artifacts were found which if made broadly public without any restrictions could result in additional looting of the sites. Secondly, in relation to the collections that we hold, specific information on the locations where objects are held within the Museum Resource Center and/or the Archaeological Collections Facility could facilitate theft of items. But beyond those security concerns, many of the catalogues as they exist are not always obvious in terms of the descriptions of items and in some cases may be erroneous. We are currently in the process of reconciling collections to the artifact lists so as to correct and refine the original entries.

Hope this helps in answering the question raised.

Glenn Farris, Senior State Archeologist
 Supervisor, State Archaeological Collections Research Facility

CC: Craig, Steele; Granbeaux, Pauline; Hennum, Paulette; Smart, Elizabeth

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